



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

chain with perfect grace and ease. We do not deny, that specimens of versification, equal if not superior to his, are to be found in the writings of some of the poets of the seventeenth century; but we know no other example of uniform and unbroken perfection in this department of the art, before the time of Pope. Dryden's translation of the *Æneid* is superior in certain parts to any portion of Pope's version of the *Iliad*; but we think we hazard little in saying, that it is decidedly inferior in point of versification, considered as a whole. Now unless poetry should resemble the sort of music which the clown in Shakspeare declared to be most agreeable to his master—namely, that which cannot be heard—it is really of some slight consequence, that it should not be too chromatic; that it should not grate too harshly on the ear; and we are far from relishing the innovations of some of our contemporary poets, who have attempted to render their versification more attractive, by making it resemble the pirates' song in the *Corsair*, which seemed a song only to ears as rugged as the rocks that sent back its echo. With whatever other defects the 'little nightingale,' as Pope was called in his youth, may be justly chargeable, we are inclined on the whole to consider it as by no means the smallest of his merits, that his claim to the poetical character is not founded on discordant harshness of versification.

We take our leave of Mr. Villemain's work, regretting that it is not in our power to give our readers a more adequate idea of its merits, and more numerous specimens of his pure and beautiful style. We can assure those who may be inclined to examine it, that it will abundantly reward the labor of perusal.

-
- ART. VI.—1. *Manifiesto del General Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana à sus conciudadanos.* Vera Cruz. Mayo, 16 de, 1829.
2. *Manifiesto del Gobernador del Estado de Mexico, ciudadano Lorenzo de Zavala.* Tlalpam. 1829.
3. *Acta del pronunciamiento de la gran Mexico, por el restablecimiento de la constitucion y las leyes.* Mexico. 1829.

We have for a long time intended to present to our readers, a view of the actual condition and prospects of our immediate neighbor, the Republic of Mexico. Recent occurrences have

combined with the essential peculiarities of her history and institutions, to command on the part of the citizens of this country, the most anxious attention ; and whether the result of internal dissension or foreign invasion has been the object of solicitude, in regard to Mexico, the public mind has of late been singularly agitated. Recent events were not, however, requisite to give to New-Spain, a paramount importance in the eye of the American politician. Her comparative and absolute influence in the cisatlantic family from extent of territory and density of population, her great physical resources both in a mineral and agricultural point of view, the uniformity in most respects of her political institutions and our own, her complicated diplomatic relations, modified by an onerous foreign debt, and by the encouragement of foreign corporations, and the investment of foreign capital for the improvement of the mines, are independent circumstances, which render her condition a worthy object of interest. We should not so long have postponed the performance of this part of our duty, had it not been for the uncertainty of the prospect and the impenetrable cloud in which an almost ludicrous series of revolutions has involved Mexican affairs. In three years there have been no less than three violent changes of administration, and more local and unsuccessful rebellions than we shall be able to record. To calculate the chances of permanent government in such a political atmosphere, or at any time within the last year, to venture to foretell what might be at the end of a given period, would have been idle. We shall not pretend to predict even now. The elemental war seems in a measure to have subsided, but we have had too much experience in observing Mexican signs of times and seasons, to trust without reserve to cloudless skies and smooth seas. Hoping sincerely that Mr. Jefferson's theory of the salutary influence of frequent rebellions and political commotions may be sound, we will endeavor to give to our readers an intelligible narrative of what has occurred, and a candid expression of opinions of the conduct of the various statesmen who have regulated the policy of Mexico, derived from an attentive, and we believe, impartial consideration of the whole subject. There are several collateral points, to which we may give an incidental notice.

It is fair to premise that our admiration of the Spanish American character is not excessive, and that the result of our observation of the conduct of the new republics since the ter-

mination of actual contest with the mother country, has been severe disappointment. It is but just to ourselves to add, that, great as has been our disappointment, we never have doubted their capacity for self-government. We do not doubt it now. In common with the great body of our fellow-citizens, the progress of the revolution was watched by us with the most intense anxiety. It was a spectacle comparable in point of moral grandeur only with our own struggle for freedom. The patriots of the South were judged worthy of as lofty pedestals as those on which the venerable figures of our own classic worthies stood ; and the names of Bolivar, San Martin, Hidalgo, Allende, and Morelos, were as completely consecrated by the fervor of our admiration, as those of any of our revolutionary heroes. There was a vague, we had almost said, irrational enthusiasm on this subject, in which we all equally partook. This kind feeling has gradually given place to a comparative indifference, which, we fear, is, in the minds of many who have had more frequent opportunities of immediate intercourse, but one shade removed from positive aversion. The change of feeling to which we have referred, has been regularly progressive since the period when, by the annihilation of the Spanish power, the new republics no longer needed our sympathy. They had fought the battle bravely, and in its alternate successes and reverses, they had had the cordial wishes of every man in our country. When the triumphant result was achieved, the world looked with equal interest, if not with equal confidence, to their conduct of civil government, and to the event of the most trying period of national existence, the interval between the termination of successful rebellion and the establishment of definite political institutions. That period also ended happily, and constitutions of a perfectly intelligible and well-settled character, though of varied forms, were adopted by all the infant communities. Columbia fixed her constitution in 1821, during the turmoil and confusion of a most bloody civil war, and the Federal government of Mexico went into operation in 1824, while the enemy, an enemy too of most faithful vigilance and determination, was still within her borders. In all these national charters, there were details little consonant with the legitimate provisions of free institutions, and practical inconsistencies at which their sanguine admirers were startled. That nations who had been so long and conscientiously contending for equality of privileges and perfect freedom of thought and action, should, by express

constitutional provision, decree religious intolerance and punish the profession of religious tenets at variance from the national standard of doctrine, could not easily be conceived. This is mentioned as one of the sources of the change of sentiment to which allusion has been made. It was, however, in itself unimportant. The actual state of society, and the influence of ancient habit, in a great measure excused it. Had there been nothing else at variance from our wishes and hopes, such incongruities would have been forgotten. The fruitful causes of discontent have, however, developed themselves since, and may be found in the terrible intestine commotions that have agitated the new republics, of which the impulse has been individual ambition or military licentiousness, and the result too often the virtual prostration of civil liberty at the foot of some successful factionist—in the total want of that sympathy which we anticipated from the uniformity of our political institutions—in the comparative indifference, if not absolute ill will towards us, which has generally been manifested in the course of our diplomatic intercourse, signally so in the instances of the failure of all attempts to negotiate a commercial treaty with Mexico, and the perverse disappointment of the enlightened and beneficent views of our government by the annihilation of the Panama project. These are some of the many causes of the alienation of our affection from our republican neighbors. There are beside peculiarities of Spanish American character, known only by actual and constant intercourse, which have had some share in contributing to the same result. We have referred to the effect of these circumstances as matter of sincere regret. It is, however, a fact beyond dispute, that the inhabitants of the Spanish American countries stand, if not positively, at least relatively, low in our estimation, intellectually, morally, and politically. We question very much whether even ‘forty-five’ of our national representatives could now be found to participate in the enthusiasm so eloquently expressed on this subject on the floor of Congress not fifteen years ago. We have entered on these prefatory remarks reluctantly, but with a firm persuasion that they embody the real, if not the avowed sentiments of a great portion of our fellow-citizens. We must not be understood to say that we have no sympathetic feeling with our fellow-republicans. We have a sensitive and rational sympathy, too sensitive not to perceive defects of character and conduct, too

rational to allow us to pass them without censure, or at least without the expression of regret.

The character of the revolutionary contest in Mexico was essentially distinct from that of the struggle in the other colonies of Spain. The sufferings of the inhabitants of the Viceroyalty of New-Spain, from the consequences of civil war, were far less severe. The conflict, though as enduring in its continuance, had but a local violence; and while scenes were acted of the most bloody and ferocious nature in parts of its territory, the great portion of the population, though not insensible to the excitement, were not immediately exposed to the dangers and sufferings of the conflict. It may be said of the revolutionary war throughout Spanish America, that its characteristic was irregularity. To New-Spain, this distinction particularly belongs. When the difficulty of cooperation with the juntas in the mother country was strongly felt in Mexico in 1809, and dissension occurred between the Viceroy and the Audiencia, the discord was scarcely perceived beyond the limits of the capital. Hidalgo's overt act of rebellion was also limited in its influence, and the effect of the first active revolutionary movement was as partial as its success was temporary. The line of his march from the small village of Dolores, where he raised his standard, to the hill of Las Cruces, within view of Mexico, whence he commenced his fatal and mysterious retreat, and thence to the wilds of Chihuahua, where he was captured and executed, may be traced by the violent combats which attended his career; but except on this line, the country seemed to be tranquil and resigned to any result. Of the unsuccessful attempts of Mina and Morelos, particularly the former, the same remark may be made; and until the close of the war immediately anterior to the adoption of the plan of Iguala and the defection of Iturbide, it may be described as a succession of brilliant, but incoherent struggles, partaking more of the character of a series of accidental insurrections, than of a continuous civil war. The duration of the contest, conducted, as it was on the part of the Spaniards, with scattered forces and inefficient leaders, and the fact, that, with the single exception of Calleja, the conqueror of Hidalgo, and, as he has been called, not inappropriately, the Spanish Claverhouse, no single general officer of distinguished military ability is to be found among the Spanish leaders, strongly illustrate this. Had it been otherwise, and had the same persevering effort been made

by the mother country in Mexico as in Columbia, though the ultimate result would unquestionably have been the same, the contest must have continued much longer, or with the increased necessity of common action, and the imminence of common danger, a more complete and effective organization of the patriotic forces would have been secured. As it was, the revolutionary spirit prevailed by its own essential strength, and from the beginning to the end of the war, the brave men who were acting in opposition to the Viceroy, acted without responsibility or control. If a more thorough excitement had prevailed in the Provinces, this independence of the revolutionary leaders must have ceased, and either a civil or military supervising power would have been called into existence. In May, 1811, Rayon, a chieftain of great capacity, and the first who realized the necessity of producing, by means of a General Congress or Junta, more harmonious cooperation among the enemies of the old dynasty, attempted to convoke a convention at Zitacuazo. In this project, representation of the people seems to have been less an object than the creation, no matter whether by regular or irregular means, of a controlling tribunal of some kind. It met, published a manifesto expressive of the feelings by which the members were actuated, and their views as to the most politic course to be pursued, and, after having continued its sessions for a few months, dissolved by its own weakness, or rather merged in the more general Congress convoked in the following year by Morelos. This distinguished man had, it would seem, from the commencement of the war, cherished with the deepest interest the project of a General Congress, and appears to have been prevented from sooner putting it in execution only by the continuance of the personal danger to which he was exposed. With the most chivalrous spirit, he combined a mind of singular capacity and penetration; and whether he directed military movements, or advised plans of civil policy, he was beyond all question the ablest and most efficient enemy of the Spanish cause that acted a part in the drama of the times. On the 13th of September, 1813, his Congress, composed of the surviving members of Rayon's Junta, of deputies from the province of Oaxaca, the only one wholly in the possession of the insurgents, and of the representatives chosen by them of the provinces in the hands of the royalist troops, met in the town of Chilpanzingo. Its history is soon told. The only acts of the Congress worthy of note, were the declaration of Mexican Independence,

published immediately after its convention, and a sketch of a Constitution for the new Republic, prepared a few months before the termination of its session. At the moment of the convocation of the Congress, the bright star of Morelos had begun to decline, and in the month of November, 1815, after an uninterrupted series of disastrous reverses, he was taken and executed by the Spaniards. On his fall, the Congress seemed to have lost its active principle, and, after maintaining an uncertain existence for a few months, was forcibly dissolved by General Teran. Thus terminated the only two attempts at regular government made in the whole course of the revolution of New-Spain, and with them ended even the appearance of cooperation among the insurgent forces. Mina's invasion followed, and on its disastrous result the energies of the revolutionists seemed paralyzed; their leaders without troops, without money, without means of communication or counsel, were scattered over the face of the country, wandering among the recesses of the mountains; and so perfect was the tranquillity, and so complete the submission, that the Viceroy wrote to his government that the revolution had ended, and that without the aid of an additional regiment, he would ensure the quiet possession of Mexico to the Spanish crown.

The military occurrences of the Mexican revolution are familiar to our readers, and we have incidentally referred to them merely as illustrative of our views of the domestic politics of the Republic. The peculiarities of the contest exercised a decided influence in producing the singular and unfortunate state of feeling to which the origin of parties may be traced. Beside the absence of any organized government, there is another circumstance connected with the concluding years of the revolution, which we will here mention. In 1819, the military contest ended, and during the two years which intervened between that time and the coronation of Iturbide, the succession of events may be more distinctly traced by the various pacific compromises and negotiations which occurred, than by acts of violence and bloodshed. Between 1820 and 1821, there were no military movements of any moment. The restoration of the Spanish Constitution had embarrassed the Royalist leaders extremely, and occasioned a dissension in the ranks of those who before had looked with undivided attention to a single object, and had never deviated from the most perfect unanimity. Royalist hitherto had been a specific term of

precise meaning. A distinction was now drawn between constitutional Royalists and absolute Royalists. The temporary liberty of the press and the institution of a comparatively fair mode of judicial inquiry, gave a license to all parties, by which all were strengthened but the Absolutists, and the Viceroy and his counsellors found their power gradually diminishing by the injudicious liberality of the government they represented, and for whose rights and possessions they were so strenuously contending. The first appearance of Iturbide as a leader, was in the execution of a project of the Viceroy Apodaca, to proclaim the absolute authority of the King in New-Spain, in opposition to the Cortes. In such a project, Iturbide's intelligence and knowledge of the real state of feeling throughout the country prevented him from earnestly involving himself; and his first act, when invested with authority, was by a politic and really beneficial compromise between the Independents and Constitutional Monarchists to give the death-blow to European dominion in Mexico. The *grito* which announced the treaty of Iguala was the knell of the authority of the Spanish monarchy. The provisions of that plan and of the treaty of Cordova, concluded on the arrival of the new Viceroy, were conceived in a spirit of judicious and necessary liberality. The latter was a virtual abdication and disavowal of the rights of the crown of Spain, and its date is that of the termination of the revolution.

The effect of this pacific termination of the conventions of Iguala and Cordova, was the security of the great body of Europeans resident in the country. This result has been pregnant with injury to the happiness and tranquillity of the new Republic. Had the same bloody scenes been acted at the close as at the commencement of the war, and the same exasperation existed generally during the years immediately anterior to the formation of the new government as did locally on the first explosion of the patriotic feeling, the Spanish residents could not have survived, and their expatriation would inevitably have been the consequence of the triumph of the American arms. A plausible pretext for party violence and political profligacy would by such a result have been withheld, and the most fruitful source of animosity would have been cut off. Hostility to the Spanish citizens has been the distinction, for want of a better, of one of the Mexican political sects, and their removal has been the theme of the most acrimonious controversy. Had they been expelled during the excitement of a civil war, and exile been

made the penalty of hostility unequivocally manifested towards republican principles, there would have been no cause of complaint. But to expatriate inoffensive men and good citizens, solely on account of their origin and parentage in spite of *guarantees* and contracts voluntarily made, and more than once solemnly ratified, is an act of political iniquity, which we should be ashamed to excuse. We regard the recognition of the rights of the Spanish residents as a subject of regret, as the necessary effect of circumstances. We consider the violation of those rights as a measure as impolitic as it was unjust. We shall have occasion to refer again to the persecution of the Spaniards in pursuing the narrative of recent events; and in delineating, as we propose to do, the parties which under one name or another have ruled the destinies and distracted the peace of Mexico.

We approach this history of parties with diffidence and reluctance. We know too well the obscurity which shrouds political history in our own country and times, to hope accurately to discriminate between contending parties abroad, or to attempt to give more than a general outline of the distinctive principles of the classes of individuals into whose hands the administration of Mexican affairs has fallen. Since the institution of the new government, there has been a political conflict of unexampled violence and exasperation between parties of nearly equal strength, the first consequence of which was to paralyse the energy of government, even in times of tranquillity, and the ultimate effect a series of revolutions destructive of every thing but the forms of the constitution. It is in the history of these recent commotions that political distinctions may be accurately learned, and to a faithful narrative of these events we invite the attention of our readers.

In the legislature or convention, which assembled after the dethronement of Iturbide, the germs of political discord became animated. The first question agitated in that body was, whether the consolidated or the federal form should be adopted as the basis of their Constitution, and on this point the most intelligent and patriotic Mexicans differed. The example of Columbia was urged on one side; that of the Federal Union of the North American States on the other. The superior energy of a national government legislating for all its citizens, particularly in time of war, was suggested by the Centralists. The danger of the want of a safe local legislation, and of tyrann-

nical usurpation of power by an uncontrolled political head, was vehemently insisted on by the Federalists. The principles of the latter, as is well known, triumphed, and the present Constitution, when once recommended by the Legislature, went into operation without opposition elsewhere.

The adoption of a federal form of government by the constituent Congress of Mexico, has been regarded as a conclusive proof of the enlightened intelligence and salutary policy of her first legislators. We are not prepared to say that this approbation is entirely undeserved; but we do say emphatically, that, by identifying the supporters of a central government with the friends of despotism, or even with the blinded advocates of pernicious or impracticable systems, great injustice has been done. The advocates of centralism were amongst the most liberal and enlightened of the patriots of Mexico. They thought they saw in a Federation of Independent States difficulties of real and insurmountable magnitude, and the experience of the last few years shows that these apprehensions were not wholly groundless. We in our own happy country are very apt to give more weight to the analogy of our political experience, and of our institutions, than they deserve; and that process of reasoning is most unsound, by means of which we conclude, that because our form of government works well, it is therefore the most eligible for other nations. In Mexico, for instance, where the argument was most strongly, but we think inappropriately used, the points of difference between its situation and ours, at the time of forming the Constitution, are most striking. Before the organization of the Federal Union in 1787, we had our Confederation, and before that, the various colonial legislatures acted in their different spheres with harmony and security. Canada and New-York are not more distinct than were New-York and Pennsylvania before the confederation of 1778. In Mexico, before the revolution, there was a perfect political consolidation. The Viceroy and Audiencia ruled the whole kingdom of New-Spain; and the Intendencies, which were subdivisions made for the convenience of the government, and not in consequence of any physical or territorial limits, bore no such resemblance to the well-defined and distinct communities among the British colonies. Not only, therefore, was it necessary to organize the Federal Government, but to create the states of which the Federation was to be formed; and not only was it necessary to supply the Legislature of the Union with

members competent to perform their duty, but to find intellectual supplies to sustain each state legislature.

It had been the policy of the Spanish rulers to keep the inhabitants of the colonies in profound and utter ignorance of political science, and to disqualify them by circumscribing the limits of their observation, and giving an unpropitious turn to their studies and pursuits, from conducting the business of government, or executing its most trifling trusts. This policy had been in great measure successful; and it was in the practical ignorance of the great mass of the population, and in their admitted inability to perform public duties, that the friends of a central, and therefore a simple, government, found a strong argument. In a community of men competent from actual experience to assume political responsibility, a complicated system, requiring the support of many, may be practicable; in a community of separate existing states, jealous of their privileges, and proud of their essential separation, it may be necessary; but to undertake the delicate and laborious process of first dividing, and then joining together; of first making the States, and then the Federation; of first making a political scheme, and then finding men capable of putting it into operation, was more than careful politicians could advise, and what none but the most sanguine could hope to see succeed. All these difficulties might, it was urged, be obviated by the organization of a central government, which would in time of war secure the concentration of the national energies, and in peace preserve to every citizen his rights. It is difficult to deny the strength of such reasoning, and we freely confess that suggestions such as these, which were forgotten in the singular glow of pleasure we felt on learning that our fellow-republicans had followed our example in organizing their infant institutions, have recently revived in our minds. In a former number of our journal,* our readers will find a view of the superiority of a central government as applied to Columbia. We refer to the sentiments there expressed, as in unison with the opinions which an attentive consideration of the subject has led us to form in regard to Mexico. In Columbia, where the question of the relative advantages of Federalism and Centralism was first agitated, there were many inducements to the adoption of a Federal Government, which did not exist in Mexico. At dif-

* No. XXVIII. N. S.

ferent periods, during the revolutions, the various departments of the country had declared themselves substantive communities, and had, in the course of the war, by their separate acts, acquired at least the jealousy of independence. For some time anterior to the meeting of the convention which assembled at Angostura in 1819, the four great divisions of Popayan, Venezuela, Carthagená, and Cundinamarca, had been acting separately. These were not merely political creations, but divisions distinctly marked by physical peculiarities, and by difference of population and climate. The inhabitants of the different provinces were in a great measure strangers to each other, having been debarred from frequent and harmonious intercourse, as well by the physical barriers of rivers and ridges of almost impassable mountains, as by the secluding policy of the Spanish Government. To join these distinct bodies into one community, to be governed by one council and common laws, was, therefore, it would seem, far less easy than to organize a confederation, by means of which the delicate duty of local legislation should be left to the States, and which would not wound the feeling of State pride, which, as we have said, antecedent independence had created. Strong, however, as these inducements were, the difficulties of producing an harmonious confederate action, with a population so ignorant and inexperienced, or even of organizing a safe confederacy, were too manifest, and a large majority of the convention of Cucutá wisely approved the project of a consolidated government. In Mexico, it is impossible to find any inducements corresponding to those which so naturally operated on the Federalists of Columbia. There had been no previous cooperation of independent States; there had been, in fact, no independent States to cooperate, no particular State or Province having assumed a separate character and government. There were no strongly marked lines to divide one portion of the country from another, and the population was equally ignorant and inexperienced. There were in reality as perfect consolidation and natural unity as could be devised. In the estimate of the merits of the two systems, we are aware that the opponents of central governments for the Spanish Americans will appeal to the experiment of Columbia, and to the melancholy spectacle her politics present, as affording a complete refutation of all our praise of her Constitution. It would be a sufficient answer to such a suggestion, to say, that the federal experiment in Mexico has

been quite as unsuccessful, and that, if we are to determine the question of the comparative merits of the forms of government by a comparison of the condition and prospects of the nations, the actual condition of the latter country is conclusive. How well the central system of Columbia would have worked, had the nation not been cursed by the presence of an individual of paramount abilities and uncontrolled ambition, it is impossible for us even to conjecture. But that it has failed, and that the nation has been convulsed by intestine feuds, are no more to be ascribed to a defect in the system, than the destruction of a town by an earthquake is to be attributed to a want of skill in the architect who raised it. It seems wholly unreasonable to conclude that the Columbian Constitution was radically defective because General Bolivar has overthrown it. If the Mexican legislators, instead of involving themselves in the intricacy of National and State governments, had organized a simple and efficient machine, for the management of which they were perfectly competent, we are inclined to believe, particularly in the absence of any individual whose talents and influence were formidable, that the administration of their affairs would have been far more easy and prosperous. They would have been more exempt from factious influence and party animosity. The pernicious consequences of the unauthorized and deplorable interference of the State and Federal authorities with each other, would have been avoided. The difficulties of an indirect mode of collecting revenue by quotas, to be raised by State taxation, would have been unfelt. We confess we are not a little influenced in arriving at this conclusion by the observation of recent events, and by the absence of any visible cause of political commotions, such as have lately agitated Mexico. It is but ordinary justice to a set of individuals who have been so much reviled as the friends of a central form of government, to state fairly even the possible advantages of their favorite system, and to give them the benefit of the inference to be drawn from the actual failure of the Federal Constitution.

After all, the Constitution, which was adopted in 1824, and which has continued in operation ever since, is in many particulars but nominally federal. The essence of a federal government is the harmonious and distinct action of the National and State councils in their respective spheres, and an exact specification, as far as is practicable, of the powers delegated to the Government of the Union. Whatever is not

expressly given or necessarily implied is reserved. These distinctions the Mexican legislators have failed to realize, and an awkward interference of the two powers, wholly inconsistent with our ideas of a Federal Union, has ensued. We have not time to do more than cursorily refer to them now. In 1827 and, for aught we know, at this day, several if not a majority of the Governors of the States were military officers of the Federation holding their commissions, and receiving their pay from the Government of the Union. The troops of the Union are under their command whilst on duty in the States, and a military staff of a duplicate character is constantly in attendance to execute the various duties of the ill-defined office.—The Governors of the States, even when having no official connexion with the general Government, are liable to impeachment at the suggestion of either House of Congress for almost every official misdemeanor, and particularly for infractions of the Constitution by the publication of laws contrary to the general laws of the Union and to the constitutional orders of the President; and if an impeachment be determined on by the requisite majority of the Chamber where the accusation is made, the person charged is *ipso facto* suspended from his employment and placed at the disposal of the competent tribunal. That tribunal is the Federal Judiciary, organized under the name of the High Court of Justice, by whose decision a State Governor may be punished in any manner and to any extent. The power of deciding upon the constitutionality of a State law is vested in Congress, and no right to control that body in the course of legislation exists in any branch of the Government. The States are encouraged to interfere in the National legislation by an express provision in the Constitution authorizing them to suggest to Congress such enactments as they may think worthy of adoption. This privilege has not been thrown away, and to one accustomed, as every citizen of this country is, to regard an interference of the State Legislatures as an impertinence, and any the least assumption on the part of the National Government as a usurpation, the legislative records of Mexico will present much that is novel and surprising. The separate jurisdiction and powers of the two great branches of the Federation seem to have been beyond the comprehension of those who framed the Constitution in the first instance, or those who have administered it since. Two instances of this confusion of legislation are recorded, and may be referred to as strikingly

illustrative of the new character of the Government of Mexico. In the spring of 1827, at the time of the commencement of the excitement against the Spanish residents, and soon after Mr. Esteva who had been recently appointed by the President to the Commissariat at Vera Cruz was ordered by the Legislature of that State to return to the capital at twenty-four hours' notice, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs addressed a letter to the Congress of Vera Cruz making inquiries with regard to some supposed disturbances within that State. He was answered that perfect tranquillity existed. In the course of a few weeks, the Governor of Vera Cruz for the attainment of an object of local interest, or in consequence of some apprehended disturbances, called the Legislature together in extraordinary session. No sooner had they met, than the Cabinet at Mexico took the alarm, and the Secretary again wrote to the Congress at Jalapa, indignantly remonstrating at what he called the disingenuousness of their conduct, and inquiring why an extraordinary session was requisite at a time, when, as they said, the public tranquillity was undisturbed. Accidentally the Legislature found spirit enough to resent the tone in which this inquiry was made, and after having the subject under discussion for several days, determined on a proper and laconic reply. The Governor was instructed to remind the Secretary that the convocation of the Legislature at an unusual season might be a measure as well of precaution as of necessity, that it might be neither, but merely expedient for the promotion of local interests, and that when in the opinion of the Legislature it was proper to communicate information to the General Government, it should not be withheld. Another equally characteristic incident recently occurred. In the spring of 1829, on the downfall of Pedraza and forcible elevation of General Guerrero to the Presidency, Mr. Lorenzo de Zavala, then Governor of the State of Mexico, and a warm personal and political friend of the new President, was appointed Secretary of the Treasury. Unwilling to resign the political influence he was enabled to exercise as Governor, he and his friends procured the passage of a law, by which he was permitted to hold both offices, though he was to perform only the active duties of the Treasury department. In the course of a few months, in consequence of one of the sudden and inexplicable changes to which the political atmosphere of Mexico is liable, this permission was unexpectedly revoked, and Mr. Zavala's opponents discovered

that the offices were incompatible. Rejoiced most probably at an opportunity of extricating himself from the responsibilities and embarrassments to which the incurable disorder of the finances of the Union exposed him, he without hesitation resigned his Secretaryship, and announced his intention to resume his State duties. Unluckily, however, in his absence the political party to which he was attached had dwindled into a minority, and his enemies, anxious to preserve the ascendancy which his absence had enabled them to secure, were driven to the necessity of devising some plan by which he could be prevented from resuming the authority of Governor. The Legislature then in session at Tlalpam, the capital of the State of Mexico, by a considerable majority passed a resolution declaring, that though the absolute right of Mr. Zavala to resume his office was unquestioned, yet that his acts whilst Secretary of the Treasury had been of such a nature as to work for the present a moral incapacity for the performance of his duty as Governor,—that he was clearly entitled to the honor and emolument of the station, and was only debarred from the actual administration. To this decision Mr. Zavala found it expedient to submit, and in this equivocal situation he was obliged to continue, until a new revolution might give him an opportunity of again entering on public life.

Such are a few of the most notable instances of the confusion and inconsistency to which we have referred. Many others might be found, and all illustrate the truth of the opinion, that to denominate the Government of Mexico Federal Republican, in the sense we give to those epithets, is an error of language; and that whatever may be its name and form, and however great the merit of its founders, it possesses many of the characteristics of centralism or real consolidation.

We have entered on these detailed observations on the true character of the Mexican Constitution, with a wish to enable our fellow-citizens accurately to understand the analogy which really exists between our institutions and theirs, and properly to estimate the conduct and opinions of the two political parties which originally were formed. Before the year 1824, these theoretical opinions were their distinctive attributes, and in fact as in name they were Centralists and Federalists. By the adoption of the present Constitution, and the consequent triumph of the Federalists, the Central party lost in a great measure its importance, and such of its leaders as were still anxious to

maintain its existence, were compelled to look out for new principles, by which it was to be sustained. These the course of political events soon enabled them to find.

The parties of Mexico have been compared to the Federalists and Democrats of the United States. This comparison is in most respects as unfair as the others to which we have had occasion to refer. In some particulars only there may be detected a slight shade of resemblance. Federalist and Democrat, even with us, are words which convey no adequate idea of the opinions, which those who invented the names severally professed. Each party was in fact composed of individuals differing on many points, and often directly agreeing upon none. Mr. Madison was a Federalist in 1787, and without changing any one of his political opinions became a Democrat in 1798. Fragments of sects coalesced, and by means of such combinations, the many-colored being, called a party, came into existence. In its formation we can trace the action of no peculiar and important principle, and in the result we see nothing but the effect of the strong necessity of union in order to secure influence, and of the sacrifice of unimportant subjects of difference of opinion. In the want of any well-settled principle in their origin, and in this combination of heterogeneous materials, there was a resemblance between the parties of the two Republics. In one material point, however, there was a total dissimilarity. At the end of our revolutionary war we had but few if any native citizens of Great Britain resident amongst us, and claiming an equality of privilege in all respects with Americans. In Mexico the old Spaniards formed an integral and most important portion of the population. They were important from their numbers, their intelligence and their wealth. They had resided in the colonies for a long period of time, and had formed connexions which firmly bound them to the soil. By the pacific termination of the revolution, and the stipulations made between the contending parties, the rights of the Spanish residents had been definitively secured, and at the time the new Government went into operation, they were in the full enjoyment of every right and privilege belonging to native citizens. They were eligible to almost every office under the Constitution, and no distinction was recognized by the laws which affected them injuriously. Thus situated and protected, it might be supposed their station in the community could have been highly enviable. But notwithstanding appearances, and all the legislative barriers

by which they were protected, there was an abundant source of anxiety and apprehension open to them in the known jealousy and aversion of the great mass of the people. They were too well aware of the existence and of the causes of animosity not to be anxious to devise means for their own protection, and with this object they were naturally led to mingle in the incipient political strife, and to look for the safest and most natural associates. That they had ulterior and less pure objects in view originally, we do not think it reasonable, without stronger evidence than has as yet been produced, to believe. However that may be, the Spanish interest formed an important material in the organization of parties. To this body of men, were naturally joined the clergy, both regular and secular, among the latter of whom particularly were many individuals of pure, and what is more rare in Mexico, of unsuspected patriotism; the landholders and other men of wealth and property, who saw the principle of danger in the superiority of their pecuniary resources, and in the insatiable rapacity of those by whom they were surrounded; the friends of a Central system; and we may add, a great body of disinterested citizens, who were actuated by the most honorable motives, and who conscientiously believed the safety of the infant Republic to depend on the participation of some of their enlightened political associates, and on the adoption of a moderate and conciliating policy.—The composition of the rival party, unjustly compared to the Democracy of the United States, was of a very varied character. There were in it, we can easily believe, some individuals of honorable and consistent patriotism, men who had been severely tried in the school of the revolution, and who were ardently attached to republican institutions; amongst these were most of those who in the Constituent Congress had warmly and successfully advocated the adoption of the Federal Constitution. These were honest politicians practically and in theory. The remaining components of this ultra-liberal party were less free from the suspicion of impure motives. The remnant of the faction which had persisted in its devotion to the late Emperor Iturbide, and who, when their idol was in prosperity had always regarded those who now appeared among the leaders of the Spanish party, (we use the name for want of a better,) as his most determined foes, joined the new sect, and seemed anxious to atone for their former sins by the profession of the most exalted patriotism. The great body of the officers of the army, and

that still more numerous class of necessitous political adventurers, which is the natural offspring of a revolution, which is scarcely perceptible whilst the waters are in agitation, but which rises in scum to the surface as soon as they become tranquil, also attached themselves to it. Little penetration is requisite to foresee which of parties so organized would be numerically most powerful, and which in the natural course of events would triumph. Independently, however, of the inherent sources of power, which the latter of these political castes enjoyed, they had the inestimable advantage which deep-rooted popular prejudice gave them, and the auxiliary of a popular watchword, by means of which subsiding passion might at any moment be renewed. 'Exile to the *Gachupines*' was written in bright letters on their standard, and under a banner so inscribed there was no difficulty in always rallying an efficient force. So early as 1824, the expatriation of the European residents was made the pretext of rebellion by General Lobato, whose insurrectionary talents we shall hereafter again have occasion to commemorate, and from that time to the present it has been the prolific theme of all the radical politicians of the Republic.

At the first election of the chief magistrate, after the adoption of the Constitution, the contest was between two distinguished revolutionary patriots, each representing, in a measure, one of the parties we have mentioned, Generals Nicolas Bravo and Guadalupe Victoria. The latter was duly elected President, and the former Vice-President. Though in the decision of this first election, the political distinctions were not perfectly defined, and other interests were involved, there was enough party feeling mingled in the contest, to give to it a high degree of importance. On entering on his official career, General Victoria, it is believed, found himself placed in a situation of great embarrassment and perplexity. His responsibilities were very great. With little or no political experience, he found himself at the head of an untried government, the success of which depended wholly on the vigor and prudence of his administration. An enemy of the most determined character was without, anxiously waiting for an opportunity to attempt reconquest. Relations with foreign nations were not definitively settled. Within, political animosity and party exasperation were working actively. Every thing seemed to obstruct the easy and successful progress of the Cabinet. Two courses of policy were presented to the new President, between which it was necessary for him to decide.

The one was, to act decidedly with one of the contending parties, and by giving to the object of his preference all the influence of the Government, to secure to it a permanent ascendancy. The other, to attempt the difficult task of conciliation, and by means of his great personal popularity, and an impartial distribution of official favors, to assuage existing animosity and reconcile political opponents. Which of them, in a community constituted like Mexico, would have been the most politic and ultimately beneficial course, it is useless even to conjecture. Victoria seems not to have hesitated to adopt the policy of conciliation, and by doing so he evinced the goodness of his heart and the purity of his motives. He formed his first and subsequent cabinets of individuals of both parties, and, generally, in the distribution of office, seemed to be directed by no wish, other than to avoid committing himself with either. He resolutely abstained from all participation in political consultations, and so determined was he in his impartiality, as to give an almost ludicrous air to his caution and reserve.* Unhappily, this anxiety to be uncommitted, in the mind of an inexperienced politician, is too apt to degenerate into indecision, if not absolute imbecility; and while he was resolutely determined to grant no more favors to one than to the other class of individuals, Victoria seemed to want sufficient energy of character to check the excesses of either. This indecision and want of moral efficiency on the part of the executive, though resulting from a good motive, was destined to be the cause of a series of misfortunes to the Republic.

In 1825, the two political Mexican sects acquired consistency and a specific character, by their connexion with masonic associations. Of the distinction between the two sects of masons, we are wholly ignorant, and can therefore account for their adoption by the two political factions in no other way than by the natural supposition, that they were resorted to as affording a convenient mode of secret consultation and efficient co-operation. Be the distinctive masonic principles what they may, the members of the Scotch and York lodges have become in Mexico identified with zealots of the two orders, and *Escoces* and *Yorkino* are terms of political distinction, which are

* The political wags of Mexico used to say of President Victoria, that, in his anxiety to avoid the appearance of partiality to either party, when he rode in the Alameda, he made it a point always to sit in the middle of his coach.

perfectly well understood, and, on that account, terms of great convenience. The Scotch lodge appears to have been instituted in Mexico at a much earlier date than its rival. The first York lodge was organized in Mexico in 1825. We wish it to be understood, that we are neither masons nor anti-masons. We neither believe masonry to be coeval with the world nor coincident with all the good that has been done in it, nor do we believe masonry to be of satanic origin, and wholly inconsistent with the spirit of our free institutions; but, perverted, as we believe it to have been in Mexico, from its proper objects and genuine principles, and converted into an engine of political warfare, we most sincerely deplore its encouragement in any country. In a community oppressed by despotism, and struggling for liberty, secret associations may be convenient as affording secure means of harmonious action; but in a country swayed by no tyranny, and liable to no oppression, except what party animosity affords, they may be viewed as so many nurseries of political rancor and factious malignity. In Mexico these affiliated juntas soon organized an effectual correspondence, and in the midnight conclaves of the masonic societies, if rumor is to be credited, the various plans and modes of policy were devised, which were to be ultimately suggested and discussed in the councils of the nation. All the active politicians were not, however, actually attached by regular initiation to the lodges; but so general was the adoption of one or the other of the societies by those who were prominent in the career of domestic politics, that the appellation became sufficiently distinctive, and though all the *Liberal* party (to use their own language) were not technically Yorkinos, nor all the Spanish party Escoceses, yet every politician, so far as the political distinction went, was either Yorkino or Escoces. In point of talent and moral vigor, the Escoces party has always had a decided advantage. In its ranks were found, without exception, all the Spanish residents, among whom were many individuals distinguished for their high intellectual culture and accomplished education. To these may be added a number of Mexicans, who, in the course of the revolution, and particularly during the existence of the Cortes, had travelled abroad, and visited not only the mother country, but England and France. To most of these individuals, many of whom have filled the most elevated offices of the republic, we most readily pay the just tribute of unqualified respect. We believe them to be the true

patriots of Mexico, actuated by pure motives, and aided by more experience and practical information than many of their fellow-citizens can pretend to. Numerically, as we have before observed, the Yorkino party has been, and so long as its unity is preserved, will continue to be, the stronger, and it is to be peculiarly regretted that among those into whose hands the Government is most likely to fall, there should be less enlightened intelligence, and, as we think has been made apparent in the persecution of the Spaniards, less moral rectitude than among those who form the minority.

From the time of the presidential election to the end of the year 1826, there was profound tranquillity in the Republic. The conciliatory policy of the executive seemed to answer all its ends, the foreign relations of the country were most favorable, the national credit was high, and the payments of interest on the loans were regularly made; a vast amount of capital had been invested by foreigners in the mines, and by means of the permanent interest thus created in the preservation of tranquillity, the most sanguine anticipations of national prosperity were not unreasonably entertained. In the Cabinet at Mexico, it was known that decided differences of opinion had existed. The interests and principles of the Escoces party were sustained by a decided majority in the Senate, and a small but equally effective one in the House of Representatives; whilst their opponents by indefatigable exertions, the aid of the press, and a dexterous use of circumstances, showed every disposition to contest their ascendancy in the administration of affairs. Still, strong as the symptoms of approaching disorder were, there was so much confidence reposed in the President, and so decided a disposition to yield to his personal influence, that but for a series of unforeseen accidents, the tranquillity of the nation, though from a want of essential elements it could not have been permanent, might have been much longer continued. In the early part of January, 1827, a Dieguino monk, of the name of Arenas, was arrested in the capital on a charge of being implicated in a treasonable conspiracy to overthrow the Government and restore the dynasty of the Bourbons. What evidence was produced against this man, in relation to whom there was a division of opinion as to his sanity, we do not know, having never seen any specific statement of the charges against him, or even a general report of his trial. The narrative of the plot, as given by the Yorkino party on his arrest, carried

absurdity on its face, and was conclusive of one of two things, either that the whole matter had been got up to promote a political end, or that Arenas had been selected as weak enough to allow himself by artful suggestions to be involved in a palpably impracticable and senseless plot against the Government. Numerous arrests were made of various insignificant priests and subordinate military officers, and Arenas, after lingering through all the forms and delays of Mexican criminal judicature, was, on the second day of June, 1827, shot by order of a military commission at the palace of Chapultepec. A few months previous, additional cause of alarm and distrust had been given by the sudden arrest of two distinguished Mexican officers, Generals Negrete and Echávarri, on a charge of a similar kind. These two individuals, both of whom had been officers in the revolutionary service, in addition to the specific offence for which they were arrested, had the indelible stain of European nativity, which rendered them at once ready objects of suspicion, and most acceptable offerings to public prejudice. They were arrested at midnight in their houses, and taken from the capital to prison, one in the castle of Perote, the other at Acapulco. After a long judicial investigation, of the details of which the public learned but little, one, if not both, was sentenced to permanent exile, and is now residing in this country. In relation to the merits of this alleged conspiracy, we speak with great diffidence, for the simple reason that we are noticing subjects of which we are in great measure necessarily ignorant, but from what we do know, we have no hesitation in saying, that the extent and importance of the plot of the Padre Arenas and his followers were greatly exaggerated. Had it been as serious as was at first supposed, others beside a half-witted priest would have been detected and punished, and a detailed history of so foul a conspiracy, involving, as it would have done, a large and detested portion of the community, must have been given to the world.

The consequences of these arrests, and of the dark suspicions to which they gave rise, may easily be conceived. A new impulse was given to the popular hostility towards the European residents, and a great accession of strength resulted to the Anti-Spanish party. Exile and confiscation were talked of without reserve; placards of the most inflammatory character were circulated; memorials from the Yorkino Legislatures were daily sent to Congress, urging that body to act; the elec-

tions had been generally strongly influenced, and it was soon apparent that it would be almost impossible to stem the torrent of prejudice and persecution. The President himself at last yielded, and a succession of legislative measures were adopted by Congress, the result of which has been the entire expatriation of the Spanish residents. It commenced in 1827, by the publication of a law declaring all natives ineligible to office, and ended in the passage of a law by considerable majorities in both houses, directing the President immediately to give passports to all the Spaniards remaining in the Republic.

We have already had occasion to mention the conduct of Mexico towards the European residents, and now recur to it merely to state the precise contract which the legislators of the new community have found it expedient to violate, and the prejudicial consequences which have ensued. When Iturbide first raised the flag of opposition to the Viceroy, he found it necessary to pursue in the outset, the policy of conciliation and compromise. He had been deputed as well against the Constitutionalists as against the Republican Insurgents, and it became necessary for him in order to sustain himself, to devise some plan by which these two classes should be united and their interests identified. The fruit of his reflection was the plan of Iguala. Its provisions, as far as they affect the privileges of the Spaniards, are perfectly distinct. It provides for the maintenance of the religion of the Church of Rome, for the union of the Creoles and Spaniards, for the independence of Mexico, for the privileges and immunities of the clergy, and for the protection of the persons and property of the citizens. It declares, *finally*, all the inhabitants of New-Spain, without distinction of persons, Europeans, Africans and Indians, and their descendants, to be citizens, and to be eligible to all offices according to their merits and virtues. This plan, objectionable as it was in some of its features in the eyes of the Republicans, was acceded to by all, and must be considered as a solemn national compact, vesting certain rights in all who were parties to it. The treaty of Cordova between Iturbide and O'Donoju followed. In all the provisional governments, which were formed in the interval between the treaty of Iguala and the adoption of the Federal Constitution, there was the same indiscriminate recognition of the rights of all the residents. Under the Constitution of 1824, the privileges of the Spanish citizens were more positively ascertained. They were declared

citizens; they were made eligible to every office except to the high executive stations and to the cabinet Secretaryships; and so certain did the framers of the Constitution wish to make their security, that among those excepted from the disabilities of aliens, natives of Spain resident in Mexico are expressly mentioned. In 1826 and 1827, there was more than one member of Congress who was a Spaniard by birth. In addition to these protections expressly provided for them, their property and persons were secured by the sections of the Constitution, prohibiting the confiscation of goods, or *ex post facto* laws, (*leyes retroactivas*. Art. 147, 148.)

In violation of all these solemn contracts, the majority in Mexico have determined, and apparently without compunction, to sacrifice the unfortunate, and we cannot but think, unoffending Spaniards. We have said that it is matter of regret, that the Spanish residents had not left the country during the revolution, or as soon as its result was ascertained. Had they then been forcibly exiled, a sufficient excuse would have been found in the necessary excitement of the times, and in the sense of severe oppression to which the Creoles were immediately liable. But it is to the iniquity of the sacrifice of rights deliberately and unequivocally guaranteed, that our censure relates. State necessity, we have been often told, is the tyrant's plea; but even the tyrant, before he resorts to this, his worst and weakest apology, usually so far yields to public opinion as to show a case of strong necessity. In Mexico, it is true, there is an attempt to show the necessity of an act of injustice and confessed infraction of law. It has been a feeble and ineffectual attempt. We are, say the advocates of proscription, at war with Spain, and it is unsafe to allow a participation of the privileges to the children of our enemy, who must still have some affection to their parent. Why then, it may be asked, were they ever allowed the privilege, of which you seek to deprive them, and why, if it is said there was a necessity of conciliation at Iguala, was an express recognition inserted in the Constitution? But it is said, they are plotting against the Government, and engaged in treasonable correspondence with the mother country. The answer to such suggestions is obvious; let the guilty be punished, and let the punishment be boldly vouched as the just retribution of an offended public. Let the severest penalties of the law fall on the heads of the offenders, but let the law which recognizes privileges, have as fair a chance as that which prescribes punishment.

The impolicy of obliging the Spaniards to leave the country of their adoption, has, we believe, been severely felt. In consequence of their enterprise and wealth, the greater portion of the commercial business of the country had fallen into their hands. Their credit was high, and so great was the available capital which they controlled, that it was matter of great convenience, as well to the foreign as to the native merchants, to transact business with them. Their perfect integrity, contrasted as it was with the characteristic dishonesty of the Creole traders, gave a degree of confidence to all who were connected with them, which is essential to mercantile enterprise and success. The wealth and character of the Spanish capitalists contributed in no small degree to the credit of the Government abroad; for so long as the Spaniards remained in the country, and were interested in the preservation of tranquillity, and in the successful result of the political experiment, the national creditors abroad felt that they had a permanent security; and it is perhaps not venturing too far to say, that, had not this source of confidence been cut off, even though there had been irregularity in the payment of the interest, new loans might have been negotiated. As it was, the first failure of Mexico to pay the interest on her foreign debt, was contemporaneous with the first invasion of the rights of the Spanish merchants, and the natural result of this unfortunate coincidence was the immediate suspension of all confidence abroad, and the fall of the stock even below the low level of the other American securities. Since the departure of the only capitalists in Mexico, the necessities of the Government have increased as their sources of supply have diminished; no foreign loans can be negotiated, commerce has declined, and the only mode of borrowing money at home they have themselves cut off. The principal source of revenue has always been the Custom-House, and since the decline of the public credit, this dependence has also in great measure been withdrawn. The large mercantile establishments of the Spanish merchants, extending over the whole country, and able by their wealth to establish branches both on the coast and at the chief towns in the interior, afforded facilities to the commercial communities, which were most sensibly felt. All these advantages, by this act of injustice, and, as we believe is now admitted, of impolicy, have been lost.

The number of *desterrados* was very great. Neither age nor poverty afforded an exemption, the law being enforced with

great rigor, and the shores of every neighboring country were strewn with the broken remnants of the once majestic vessel of the Spanish power in America. Many of the emigrants, on their arrival in the United States, whither a large majority repaired, as to the nearest place of refuge, were totally destitute of means of support. In New-Orleans, scenes of most agonizing distress were exhibited, and to such an extent was it carried, that but for the benevolent exertions of the inhabitants of that city, many of these unfortunate exiles would have perished from want and exposure. In Mexico, the individual suffering was intense ; wives were separated from their husbands for want of the pecuniary ability to accompany them ; fathers were torn from children whom they were obliged to leave with the most uncertain means of support ; the humblest *arriero* in the country, dependent for actual sustenance on his peculiar labor, had to yield obedience to the stern mandate of the Government ; and the poor ballet-master, who had been so instrumental in affording amusement to the ungrateful legislators of the metropolis, was equally affected by the penalty of the law, with the most active *Escoces*, who had the misfortune to have been born in Spain. It might be considered as a comparison almost ludicrous, to point out the analogy of the exile of the Spaniards, to the standing instances of impolicy, the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain ; but in no respect, neither in folly, importance, nor consequences, as respects Mexico, are they very dissimilar. In the origin of all three there is a strong resemblance. Prejudice and fanaticism of one kind or another were the impulses in all.

It is to the excitement occasioned by the conduct of the Government towards the Spaniards, that we may immediately ascribe an event which ensued, and which, as being the first of a series of rebellions and revolutions, and as thence becoming authority for what followed, every friend of Mexico, and republican institutions, must cordially regret and condemn. We refer to the abortive plot, which was developed in January, 1828, and is generally denominated the rebellion of Otumba. At the head of it, unhappily for himself, his party and his country, was the then Vice-President of the Republic, Nicolas Bravo. No one, who has made the revolutionary history of Mexico a subject of study, can fail to recollect the agency of this distinguished individual in promoting the successful result of the contest. As a patriot, General Bravo was unsuspected,

having proved his unwavering fidelity by sufferings and sacrifices of more than ordinary severity ; as a soldier, he was distinguished by his untiring determination and romantic courage, and as a man, he had acquired a distinction the brightest and proudest a military man can secure, of never, in the course of a long and ferocious war, in which the courtesies and moderation of civilized conflict were by common consent disregarded, having been betrayed into a violent or vindictive act, or having unnecessarily stained his sword with blood. His father and brothers had at different times been butchered, by order of the Viceroy ; yet with all these inducements to the indulgence of revenge, it is recorded to his honor, that no prisoner of war who happened to fall into his hands, ever had reason to complain. To this gentleness of disposition, he added a most faithful attachment to the country of his birth, and a rooted aversion from the control of the mother country. He was one of the earliest opponents of Iturbide, and was an active member of the temporary government, which was organized on his fall. On his election to the Vice-Presidency, he experienced the usual fate of the second officer of a federal government, and ceased to act a prominent part in public affairs. As the leader of the Escoces party, however, he continued to sustain his importance, and to him, as one of the candidates for the Presidency, public attention was more or less directed. His political sentiments, in most respects, were ascertained, and it was perfectly well known, that to the proscriptive and harsh policy of the Yorkino party he was decidedly opposed. However unequivocally his sentiments on this subject were expressed, there was too much confidence reposed in his patriotism and characteristic moderation, to allow any one to anticipate so mad an act of opposition to the constituted authority, as the revolt of Otumba. The history of that attempt may be told in a few words. The first alarm given in the capital, was in the last week in December, 1827, when it was ascertained that a colonel in the army, of the name of Montaña, had raised the standard of rebellion, and published an inflammatory manifesto at Otumba, a small village near Mexico. At first, this movement was carelessly regarded by the Government ; and it was not until it was ascertained that several leaders of the opposition party, among others General Bravo, had secretly and mysteriously left the capital, that the probable danger was realised. The President immediately issued his proclamation, calling on

all good citizens to support him in the performance of his constitutional duties, and despatched a large force under the command of General Guerrero, to suppress the revolt. Bravo, after leaving Mexico, wandered about almost unattended, and unable to form a junction with the other conspirators, which he at last, and with difficulty, effected. Guerrero marched immediately on Tulancingo, a small town not far distant, whither the rebels had removed their head-quarters, and compelled them to surrender without a blow. To the decision and promptitude of the Secretary of War, Gomez Pedraza, aid of the leader of the government troops, may be entirely referred the sudden and easy suppression of this ill-concerted revolutionary movement; for had enough time been allowed to the conspirators to rally their friends and political adherents around their standard, in the excited state of the public mind, a different result might have occurred. As it was, numerous individuals of rank and personal as well as official distinction, were on their way to join the Vice-President, and it is impossible to say how far the conspiracy may have extended. Among these was General Barragan, the Governor of the State of Vera Cruz, who was arrested and sent with General Bravo to Mexico for trial. The result of that trial, conducted as such procedures in Mexico usually were, without publicity, was the conviction of Bravo and his associates, and their permanent exile from the Republic.

We have not time to inquire what were the real objects which General Bravo and his followers proposed to attain, nor what degree of credit to give either to his assertions of perfect purity of motive, or to the dark accusations of his political opponents. The plan of Montaño contained a specification of various supposed grievances, accompanied with an imperative demand on the executive for redress; it required the suppression of secret societies, a change of ministers, the delivery of passports to Mr. Poinsett, our minister at Mexico, who had become obnoxious to the party, and concluded with a general requisition that the provisions of the Constitution and laws should be religiously enforced. Whether there were ulterior objects of a more improper character, as the Yorkino party have vehemently declared, is a question which, for all the purposes of condemnation, it is wholly unnecessary to examine. It is little consistent with General Bravo's known sentiments and previous conduct, to suppose, that he acted for a moment

in concert with any who meditated a restoration of the authority of the Bourbons, and we freely acquit him of so much of the charge which his enemies have preferred; but no terms of censure are too strong for the man who, to gratify the impulse of passion or to redress imaginary or real injuries, can expose his country to the risk of civil war, and endanger the existence of republicanism itself, by giving a precedent to future malcontents, and some shade of authority to the gloomy prophecies of monarchical calculators. There were in Mexico, doubtless, injuries, personal and political, which needed redress; there had been, in the case of the old Spaniards, a flagrant violation of the fundamental laws of the land, which it is reasonable to suppose, had been severely felt by those who, from principle and feeling, were strongly attached to that portion of their fellow-citizens; but the course the patriot, however indignant, would have pursued, is widely different from that which the rebels of Otumba chose to follow. General Bravo's personal influence was great, and by his example all his adherents would have been guided. Had he used that influence to assuage, not exasperate the animosity which existed, and to induce his dependents to await the certain and just operation of public opinion, he might before this time have enjoyed the consolation of saving the country, for whose liberties he had shed his blood, from the agony and convulsion it has since experienced. In thus strongly condemning the conduct of these misguided men, we must be understood as grounding our censure on general principles, and not on the vague and intemperate accusations of political zealots of any side. The righteous indignation of the Yorkino leaders at General Bravo's conduct, presents, as we shall have occasion to see, a strong contrast with their revolutionary movements in the following year.

How far the Escoces party generally were involved in the insurrection of Otumba, can be of course only matter of speculation. It is, however, a fair inference, that, approving as they unquestionably did, of the various objects specified in Montaña's manifesto, they would not have complained of the mode adopted, had it been successful. Its defeat was a serious, if not a fatal blow to their interest. It not only gave a color to the accusations of their adversaries, and in that way a support to their cause, but by withdrawing so strong a competitor for the chief magistracy at the ensuing election, ensured the elevation of the popular aspirant. General Vicente Guerrero had long

been before the people as a candidate for the Presidency in 1828, and had been chosen as the leader of the Yorkino party. For the two years immediately antecedent to the election, the probability of his success had been gradually becoming stronger; and when, by the exile of Bravo, his only formidable competitor was withdrawn, the probability was matured into certainty. The primary elections, which took place in the summer of 1828, for the members of the Legislatures, which were to choose the President, were all, with few exceptions, as was supposed, favorable to the Yorkino interests. In the interval, however, between the suppression of Montaño's revolt and the election, a political coalition had been formed, which, but for a resort to arms, would have utterly disappointed the wishes and expectations of the ultra-democratic leaders. The Escoces party had united with the seceders from the Yorkino party, who, under the name of moderate or middle men, had acquired considerable influence. The candidate selected by this combination was Gomez Pedraza, then Secretary of War. He had originally been an active member of the Yorkino party, and had acquired, in the administration of his office, great credit and influence by his energy and ability. On the occasion of the late rebellion, he had been mainly instrumental in producing the result which ensued, and was on that account supposed to be the last man to whom the Escoces party were likely to adhere. It is certain, that the support which they gave him was wholly unexpected. The election took place in September, 1828, when, to the utter mortification and discomfiture of the Yorkino leaders, it appeared that their candidate, on whose elevation they calculated with so much confidence, as the only means of sustaining their favorite policy, was in a minority. Ten States had voted for Pedraza, and eight for Guerrero. It may be easily conceived, that such a result produced the utmost consternation in the ranks of the ultra party, and that violent, we wish we could believe honest indignation, usurped the place of confidence and exultation. To them it was immaterial whether a decided opponent or a moderate or doubtful friend were elected, since their hopes and calculations depended wholly on the elevation of one on whose sympathies they could securely rely. From Pedraza, elected as he had been by their enemies, and tainted, as they supposed him to be, with moderate principles, they could hope for little. The alternatives were left to them of submitting quietly to the new dominion,

as good citizens and patriots, and of trusting to the result of a constitutional inquiry into the alleged illegality of the election by the State Legislatures, or of having recourse to a forcible redress in an appeal to arms.

At this period of popular excitement, a new character appeared on the stage. This was General Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana, then Lieutenant-Governor of the State of Vera Cruz. This young soldier, after the fall of Iturbide, to which he had greatly contributed, had been living in retirement on his *hacienda*, near Jalapa, and by remaining for several years in perfect seclusion, had ceased to be an object of public interest. By all who knew his signal military abilities and talent for political intrigue, he was regarded as one of the most dangerous of the citizens of the Republic. He was a Centralist in 1824, and had always been charged, how justly we do not pretend to say, with hostility to the administration of the first President. The storm which now seemed on the eve of bursting on the Mexicans, afforded to this discontented chieftain a strong inducement to appear anew, and a fair opportunity at once to conciliate his political enemies, and to place himself in an imposing and popular attitude before the nation. Scarcely had the news of Pedraza's election circulated through the country, when it was ascertained that Santa Ana had raised his flag in Vera Cruz, and before the government could realise that a new civil war had broken out, with characteristic activity he had invested and seized the castle of Perote. On his banner were inscribed the fascinating mottos of redress of popular grievances, and the utter extirpation of the *Gachupines*. President Victoria immediately issued his proclamation, denouncing the attempt of Santa Ana as treasonable, and imploring the assistance of the country in support of the lawful authority of the Republic. The energetic and decisive language of Victoria in his proclamation deserves to be quoted, especially as we shall have occasion to contrast it with the temporizing and submissive tone he was obliged to use in the course of a few months to the armed rebels of the capital. After referring to the pretended patriotic objects of Santa Ana, he says—

‘It is no new artifice to allege specious motives to excuse ambitious designs, and although the Mexicans have been taught by experience to close their ears against such suggestions, it is my duty to repeat to them unceasingly, that he profanes the name of

the country, who invokes it in order to substitute his private will for the legitimate power of the Constitution and the laws. No more execrable offence can be committed by a citizen. It is a crime which degrades freemen, who, when by association they constitute a Republic, disclaim any other mode of expressing their opinions but through the medium of the constituted authorities. It is an abuse, which unless repelled with vigor and energy, must lead to the total dissolution of society.

‘For these reasons, the Government in conjunction with the august Congress of the Union, is taking the most decisive measures to cut short at once, the evils with which the Republic is threatened, to re-establish confidence and restore peace.

‘And since the indignation evinced by the people on witnessing the revolutionary movements that occurred at the beginning of the year, was sufficient to dissipate them like smoke, I once more call on you, my fellow-citizens, to lend your assistance to a Government, which has no other object but the national prosperity, and which throws itself with confidence upon the Constitution of the Republic,—the holy principles which we have proclaimed—the firmness and wisdom of the General Congress and of the Legislatures of the States and the inextinguishable attachment professed by the Mexicans to their liberties and laws. If anarchy again menace us, let us baffle its impotent efforts. Woe to the wretch who dares profane with impious hand the pages of that Constitution, which is the idol of our hearts !!’

To this animated appeal of the executive, the nation responded with apparent cordiality, and the new insurrection seemed on the point of sharing the fate of its predecessor, the Otumba plot. Santa Ana, after defending the fortress of Perote against the government troops, was obliged to abandon it and to seek refuge in the Province of Oaxaca, where in the inaccessible recesses of the mountains, and amid a population devoted to his interests, he hoped to escape until the outlawry, which had been declared, should be revoked. The denunciations of this abortive attempt at revolution were not confined to the Federal executive; the press reviled its abettors as parricides and incendiaries, the State Legislatures sent addresses to the President, promising their aid in suppressing the rising spirit of anarchy, and could we form any opinion of the actual state of public feeling from these manifestations, we should say, that by all parties, revolutionary attempts of any kind were regarded with equal aversion. Yet amid this loud expression of patriotic fervor, seditious and violent measures were secretly

planning, and the seeds of a fatal and terrible revolution were actually vegetating.

On the 6th of October, 1828, about a month after Santa Ana first took the field, Don Lorenzo de Zavala, Governor of the State of Mexico, and the most active among the Yorkino leaders, was arrested at his house in San Augustin, on a charge of being implicated with the insurgents, and actually in correspondence with them. This charge was specifically made in the Senate, and after an animated debate of several days, it was determined that there was ground of accusation and reasonable suspicion. It was entirely within the constitutional capacity of Congress, or either branch of it, to order the arrest, which was made by a warrant from the Senatc. Whether or not Zavala was guilty of the charge thus solemnly preferred against him, it is difficult with our inadequate information to conjecture. In a manifesto since published by him he has vehemently asserted his innocence, and complained most feelingly of the proscriptive measures of which he was the victim. Beyond this assertion and these complaints, he has offered no exculpation, and against them his accusers have produced evidence, which if uncontradicted, is conclusive of his guilt, or at least a justification of the proceedings instituted against him. To the world one circumstance will suffice to justify suspicion, if not conviction. Unwilling to stand the judicial inquiry, with which he was threatened, a short time after his arrest, Zavala found means to escape from the city of Mexico, and, accompanied by but a single friend, concealed himself from pursuit. Had he been innocent, he would have sought, not shunned inquiry, and would have appealed with honest confidence to the bar of public opinion for complete absolution. It is idle to pretend that he was afraid to trust himself in the hands of vindictive enemies, and that on that account, flight affords no fair presumption of guilt. The government party was not strong enough (and no one knew their weakness better than Zavala,) to sacrifice an innocent and popular man, to gratify personal and political hostility. His friends were too numerous and influential to submit to such an outrage. With this damnatory circumstance in the case, the friends of Zavala must produce less questionable evidence than they have offered, to relieve him from reasonable suspicion, or to fix on his accusers the imputations which have been made against them.

In the interval between Zavala's flight and the end of the

following month, (November) the public mind, particularly in the capital, was agitated by vague and undefined apprehension of danger ; but whence it was to proceed, and in what form to come, no one could tell. The government party, and the friends of the President-elect, were conscious that they were unprepared to control any formidable movement among the people, and could not calculate what time would be allowed to gain the strength they needed. The populace of the city composed, as it is, of the most heterogeneous ingredients, was agitated by various feelings ; the desire of rapine in civil tumult operating on the licentious and necessitous, and the fear of personal danger and pecuniary loss agitating the orderly and wealthy. Among the foreign merchants, a strong feeling of apprehension existed, and they could not view the lowering elements of war and confusion but with genuine alarm. The events of the 30th day of November proved that these hopes and fears were not wholly groundless. On the night of that day, a detachment of the national militia, headed by an officer named Cadena, violently took possession of the artillery barracks on the outskirts of the city, known by the name of the *Acordada*, and announced their determination to annul the election of Pedraza, and compel the Government to enforce rigidly the laws against the Spaniards. The flag of rebellion was soon surrounded by all the discontented caballers of the capital, at the head of whom were Generals Guerrero and Lobato, and the fugitive Zavala, the last of whom had been for several days secreted in the neighborhood. A strong force, composed of several regiments of regulars, a portion of the organized militia, and the great body of the lower people, assembled around these leaders, and an imperious requisition to the effect stated, was sent to the executive. The President and his counsellors had but a small force to oppose to the rebels. The regiment of Toluca, amounting to about six hundred men, and a small detachment of troops which had just arrived, under the command of General Filisola, were all that could be depended on. Yet with this inadequate support, the Cabinet determined on resistance. To whom the first aggression is to be attributed, is not ascertained. Each party accuses the other of being the assailant. It is not difficult, however, to point out the individuals on whom the odium of the frightful scenes which ensued ought to fall. It belongs to those desperate partisans who raised their hands against the laws and Constitution of their

country, the first occupiers of the *Acordada*. In the course of a few hours after it was ascertained that the constituted authorities were determined to sustain their legitimate rights, and were not disposed to submit to the pretensions of armed rebels, the city of Mexico was converted into a field of battle and a theatre of carnage. It has been the boast of the Mexican eulogists, that never, during the revolution, were the large cities of the Republic profaned, nor the noble institutions which they contained endangered by the immediate presence of hostilities and violence. It was reserved for republican Mexico to exhibit the revolting spectacle of civil war in its capital, and before the face of its first magistrate. For three days a violent and sanguinary combat continued in the principal streets of the city, the palace and the *Acordada* being the respective head-quarters of the Government forces and the rebels. Several officers of distinction on both sides were killed. The success of these combats was various, and with so much spirit and ability was the defence of the palace conducted, that but for the irresolution and singular unwillingness to rely on his military counsellor, displayed by the President, it is more than probable that this outrage would have met with just retribution. On the 4th day of December, the first compromise was suggested, but failed in consequence of the reluctance of the rebels to accede to any thing but unconditional compliance with their demands. General Guerrero, who, during the siege, had remained in a very unequivocal attitude at a neighboring village, arrived at this time in the city with a reinforcement for his friends, and it soon became evident that the crisis was at hand. On the same day, Pedraza left the city with a small company of friends, the Congress dissolved itself, and the President, forgetting the dignity of his station, and his personal and official elevation, repaired to the quarters of the enemy, and agreed to a capitulation. The measure of Mexican dishonor was not yet full. Had the scenes of violence and turmoil closed with the virtual extirpation of the Government, and the civil war been limited in its pernicious influence to the overthrow of Constitutional authority, deep as would have been the disgrace, there might not have been found wanting those who would have excused what had occurred. But what succeeded the capitulation of the 4th day of December, 1828, no one, however bigoted and determined in Yorkino propensities, will, we hope, excuse. A portion of those who had so readily clustered around Mr. Zavala and his patriotic junta,

had other than political ends to attain. Their appetites were far too craving to be content with such gratification. The *leperos*, amounting in number to several thousand, and many of the militia, immediately on the cessation of hostilities, demanded, as their reward, the pillage of the capital; and their leaders, it would seem, could devise no pretext for denial. The active men in the revolt, must, on this occasion, have found an excuse for their conduct in the complying disposition which had been manifested toward them. For two days, Mexico was the victim of uncontrolled and licentious pillage. The *parian*, or large bazaar, where the principal retail stock of the city was deposited, and where there was at that time property to the amount of many millions of dollars, was the principal object of attack. There, the Spanish merchants had generally resided, and there the Mexican populace could find at once the richest and most welcome plunder. Where the stores could not be opened by less violent means, fire-arms were applied, and the most wanton destruction of property ensued. Valuable goods of all kinds, cloths, plate, jewelry, were scattered about the city, and sold by the plunderers of the parian for almost nothing. The depredation was not directed entirely against the warehouses of the Spanish merchants; the property of Mexicans and foreigners alike was sacrificed. It was not until the third day after the pillage commenced, that the victorious party found courage to check the tumult, and even then order seemed rather to be the result of satiety than constraint.

The political change which followed this disgraceful scene was complete. Pedraza, unable to resist the torrent which was setting against him, had left the city during the affray, and soon after, probably finding but little hope of ultimate success in a contest with his triumphant adversaries, demanded his passports, and has since resided in England in voluntary exile. Victoria, thrown by circumstances into the hands of the dominant faction, was compelled to appoint new Cabinet ministers. The election which had recently been made, was declared null and void; and Congress, which had reassembled, pronounced Guerrero to be duly chosen President, and General Anastasio Bustamante, a distinguished officer and active Yorkino leader, Vice-President. On the installation of the new officers further changes were made, Zavala was fully acquitted of all the charges which had been preferred against him, and as a reward for his important

services was made Secretary of the Treasury, and Santa Ana, the execrated outlaw, in consideration of his merits, was promoted to the War Department.

The revolution which was thus effected, has not wanted apologists even in this country. In the violation of popular rights, which is supposed to have attended the election of Pedraza, it has been said there was a justification of all the outrages that were committed; and it has been specified as one of those extreme cases in which the people were at liberty to take redress into their own hands. We cannot view it in this light. By every man who is not tainted with the worst and most dangerous radicalism, it cannot but be regarded as a pernicious violation of well settled law, and an unjustifiable attempt to overthrow a government, which had nothing to excuse it but success. In forming this estimate of the conduct of the leaders of the Acordada insurrection, we have been guided solely by the statements of Mr. Zavala, in the publication, whose title we have prefixed to this article; and in the emphatic condemnation of it which, as friends of republican institutions, we feel it our duty to pronounce, we have adopted, perhaps erroneously, the narrative made by this Coryphæus of the plan. It cannot, at least, be said, that we have resorted to improper sources of information. In the manifesto, to which we have referred, we have no hesitation in saying there is the avowal of the most shameless political profligacy, and the expression of sentiments which, we hope, it would be injustice to his friends to suppose they entertained. Were such opinions to be acted on with us, we might, on the occurrence of the first strong political excitement, be called on in our own tranquil times, to witness scenes of civil war and bloodshed, and to behold our own republic sunk to the low level to which our neighbors have been unhappily brought. We earnestly deprecate all approval of such sentiments, and all apology for such conduct. Let us, in the true spirit of justice, view all attempts at the subversion of constituted authority with equal detestation, and not fall into the irrational inconsistency of Mexican politicians, and in one moment stamp with reprobation Bravo's abortive treason, and celebrate with praise or extenuate with sophistry the triumphant rebellion we have just described. The same principle regulates both, and it is to that principle our condemnation refers.

By the complete triumph of the Yorkino party, and the

organization of a popular executive administration, it was believed, the permanent happiness and tranquillity of the Republic were secured. On the vigor of General Guerrero, there was secure reliance, and sanguine hopes were entertained that the community, once relieved from the incubus of a monarchical faction, would soon be restored to political health. But the seeds of disease were deeply planted, and the specific of Yorkino ascendancy was found to be ineffectual. The finances, which, it was supposed, were to be restored to order by the magic influence of the new minister, were inextricably entangled. Commerce was rapidly declining, and with it the revenue diminished. The army, strengthened in influence by its agency in the late revolution, had too long indulged in license to be subordinate now; and had not circumstances occurred from abroad to occupy the attention and require the energies of the military, it is more than probable that the fatal weakness of the new administration would sooner have been developed.

The arrival, however, of the Spanish invading army under Barradas at Tampico, in the summer of 1829, opened a new channel for public feeling. Our limits will not permit us to dwell upon the merits and details of this convulsive effort of the Spanish Government, to effect the reconquest of Mexico. We think too highly of the Spanish nation, to say that the determined obstinacy its rulers have manifested in relation to the former colonies is characteristic; we cannot but believe that the idea of the possibility of reconquest, exists only in the distempered brain of the monarch and his immediate counsellors, and that no one, who has paid any attention to the condition of the new republics, can suppose that any plan, however artfully and powerfully framed, can have more than temporary success. The attempt of the invading army on the coast of Mexico during the last summer, was a disgrace to the age. Those who advised, and those who actually assisted, are equally worthy of contempt and abhorrence. To land on the shores of Mexico at a season of the year when pestilence taints every breeze, with a feeble force, amounting in all to little more than four thousand men; to attempt the conquest of a country, through which, on account of physical impediments, it is difficult to march a body of troops even when unopposed; to take possession of an unfortified town which it was impossible to defend, and from which, no intercourse could be maintained with the shipping; to alienate the feelings of the people by acts of cruel and unnecessary oppres-

sion ; to surrender without a struggle, and to abandon fellow soldiers to captivity and death, were acts alike worthy the commander of the expedition against Mexico, and those by whose orders he acted. On Mexican politics the Spanish invasion had a decided, though temporary influence, by diverting the attention of the nation from subjects of domestic grievance, and by giving the new administration the distinction of a military triumph. The proclamations of Guerrero, on the arrival of the Spaniards, contained the expression of the most fervent patriotism, and the success of his minister and favorite Santa Ana was hailed by the people generally with the utmost enthusiasm. But, with all the outward appearance of concord and unanimity, there was still a mortal rottenness in the political body, which was soon to produce its decay and ruin. The reaction of feeling, particularly among the military, was strong on the ultimate defeat and expulsion of the invaders, and we have to record another revolution less violent than any of its precursors, and far more unaccountable.

If the elevation of Guerrero to the Chief Magistracy, was, as has been asserted, a popular measure, his fall, after continuing in office not quite a year, evinces the slight confidence to be reposed in Mexican popularity. On the arrival of the Spanish invasion, Congress, in the exercise of their unlimited prerogative, had invested the President with extraordinary powers, to be retained until the danger should be at an end.

This dictatorship, the new President evinced a strange and decided unwillingness to resign, and his reluctance was quickly seized by his political opponents as a pretext for resorting to violence and compulsion. Various insurrectionary movements of slight importance occurred in several of the States, but no serious apprehensions were felt by those in power, until the fourth of December, 1829, the anniversary of the Yorkino revolution, when Bustamente, the Vice-President of the Republic, placed himself at the head of the army of reserve, stationed in the State of Vera Cruz, issued a proclamation denouncing the abuses and usurpations of the Executive, and commenced his march on the capital to enforce the threatened reform. Immediately on receiving the news of this alarming defection, Guerrero resigned his extraordinary powers, convoked the Congress, and appealed to that body for support. But the symptoms of increasing weakness had begun to manifest themselves, and the victors of the *Acordada* soon had reason to doubt the

continuance of their ill-acquired power. No sooner had the President left the capital with a small body of troops to meet the approaching enemy, than the *grito* of revolt was raised, and by the agency of several active politicians, a complete and bloodless revolution was effected. The troops in the city of Mexico, announced their adherence to Bustamante, and demanded the organization of a provisional government. Guerrero thus placed between two enemies, and suspicious of the fidelity of the few troops who still adhered to him, pursued the only safe cause which was left, by abdicating the Presidency, and retiring to his estate. His example was immediately followed by Santa Ana, and the other Acordada leaders, and the new government composed of a temporary Executive of two distinguished civilians, Velez and Alaman, and General Quintanar, assumed the administration of affairs until the arrival of the Vice-President, who was chosen by the troops as the temporary successor of Guerrero. In the hands of Bustamante and his party the government has remained ever since.

The process by which this last revolution has been effected, is, we confess, to us wholly inexplicable. The party by which it has been accomplished seems to be composed of individuals of the most contradictory political tenets, and of characters the least fitted for coalition. Federalist and Centralist, Yorkino and Escoces, seem to have forgotten all their differences, and we can discern in the composition of the triumphant party, no distinctive principle, by means of which we can explain the incongruities to which we have referred. To the influence and direct agency of the army can alone be ascribed this anomalous result, and to this source we are compelled to attribute the fall of that party which claimed to be exclusively popular, and of the individuals who had been chosen as their favorites. How long the government of the new rulers is to continue, is a question that no one can pretend to answer. If, as we have suggested, the last revolution is to be ascribed to the discontents of the military, the term for which the new administration is to enjoy their trust must necessarily be short, as the source of military discontent, the difficulty of making regular payments to the troops, has not been removed. Whilst the army exists in its present organization, and its influence continues to be so great, no safe political calculation can be made, as the result of any commotion must be regulated by its participation, and that leader must succeed who can control it. In a country so

unsettled there is of course little prospect of a diminution of this military influence. Had the first Executive of the Republic sooner realised the necessity of a retrenchment of the national expenses, the military force would most naturally have been the first object of economical reform, and even a rapid reduction of the army might have been effected before civil disorder occurred. Unfortunately, however, the community was infected with a military mania; military distinction was the object of universal ambition; and so powerful was the opposition thus generated to any attempt to curtail the army, that the administration found it expedient, and thought it necessary to remain satisfied with disbanding so much of the local militia as had been called into service. If the reduction of the army were one of the conditions, on which Pedraza secured the support of the moderate party in 1828, and if there be reason to believe that this pledge would have been redeemed, the true friends of Mexico will have additional reason to deplore the violence of which he was the victim. In Mexico, the character of the army is very peculiar. Its composition strongly resembles that of the whole community, being formed of various classes, castes and colors. They are as savage in appearance as in disposition. Long experience in predatory and irregular warfare during the revolution precluded the existence of any portion of the chivalrous spirit, which forms the distinction of military men in modern times. In the short interval of tranquillity which occurred after the surrender of the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, in 1825, the troops, both regulars and active militia, were quartered in the different garrisons and large cities, and indulged in every species of licence and disorder. The most dignified occupation of the soldiery was police duty. Notwithstanding the ease of such employment, desertions were frequent, and so late as 1827 impressments to fill the vacancies thus created were constantly resorted to in the capital. On the first breaking out of the civil disorders, a new sphere of licentious action was opened to the soldiery, and each revolution has witnessed their active interference. In 1828 the regular army alone amounted to thirty thousand men, and it is not probable that any diminution has taken place since. Whenever the time arrives when no proper military occupation can be devised for this host, they will be turned loose to prey upon the community, and to defy the control of all authority. The hope of effecting a disbandment of the army, or of any considerable portion of

it, is now, we fear, almost desperate, and while it exists, and is able, as it must be, to exercise an influence in public affairs, we confess we can discern little chance of the restoration of permanent tranquillity, and the renewal of public confidence.

Such is the melancholy narrative of recent events in Mexico, and such the gloomy prospect of the future. To the enthusiasts in the cause of Spanish America, and to the rational friend of republican systems, the history of Mexican affairs during the two last years must occasion equal pain. If such enthusiasm imply approbation of any excess, which is called popular and democratic, or if it involve any sympathy with radical and dangerous politicians, we do not pretend to be among the former. To the latter class we are proud to assert our adherence. But while we cordially lament the degradation of our fellow-republic, we are not without a source of consolation even in the severity of our disappointment, and while we contemplate with regret the national humiliation of all the Spanish American States, the question will obtrude itself, what reason was there to anticipate a different result? Ages of unmitigated despotism had rolled over the colonies of Spain, in the course of which no means of education and no facilities for intellectual culture had been afforded. The prisoner, who from infancy has been shut up in a dungeon, is not more effectually secluded from the light of day, than was the great mass of the colonial population from the moral and intellectual light, which the rest of mankind enjoyed. They held no communication with European nations, they were visited by no travellers, they were debarred from all participation in foreign commerce, political experience they had not, and abstract political knowledge it was impossible for them to obtain. Suddenly the gloomy fabric of Spanish despotism was shaken to its foundation, and the enthralled population was in a moment freed from the shackles, which had bound it to the soil. To expect that in the short space of twenty years, beyond which time the actual revolutionary contest continued in no part of Spanish America, practical knowledge should be acquired, and a capacity for self-government created is more than the most sanguine would pretend. Bigotry, slavery, ignorance, and seclusion, require allowances, and now that we have fully realised their influence, we are ready to make them, and are most willing to ascribe to the appropriate causes all the melancholy results which we have recorded. A long period must elapse

before the benefits of untrammelled intelligence can be felt; and the severe discipline of national misfortune and individual suffering must be endured, before we can venture to pronounce the inaptitude of our fellow-republicans for the noble institutions they have endeavored to establish. Prejudice must be eradicated, ancient habit neutralised, public opinion purified by rational religious restraint, and delicate moral sensibility must be made to operate. The great truth must be acknowledged, that public and private integrity are identical, and the fatal error must be corrected into which the apologists of Mexican revolutions always fall, that the man, whose private life is stained by crime, or disfigured by licentious practices, can be a safe public agent, or a worthy executor of public trusts.

The truth cannot be disguised that in Mexico this salutary public opinion is not felt, and a high tone of moral feeling is not discernible. Our remark is, of course, a general one, liable to all the exceptions which each grateful traveller may make in favor of the instances of virtue and domestic and social worth that have fallen within his notice. As a general observation we deem it perfectly and easily sustainable; and until we can be made to believe that a moral improvement has been wrought, we must be excused from indulging in flattering anticipations of political tranquillity and happiness. In the recent commotions little trace of such a change is discernible, and in the school of civil discord there is but slight inducement to the practice of public or domestic virtue.

We have thus endeavored freely and candidly to state the opinions which a deliberate examination of the whole subject of Mexican politics has induced us to form. We believe that there is a radical defect in the constitution of society in that distracted country, to which may be attributed all that has occurred; and we apprehend the repetition of such disasters so long as the want of sound public opinion, acting directly on the community, exists. To supply that deficiency, we rely on the influence of time and general education, on the gradual eradication of prejudice, and free intercourse with the rest of the world. When the legislators and statesmen of the new Republic become qualified so to administer the trust confided to them, we may look to the permanent establishment of political institutions, and to a harmonious co-operation with the other nations of the world, for the promotion of the social happiness of mankind. Lord Bacon has said, that the four pillars of

government are religion, justice, counsel, and treasure; and that when any of them are shaken, 'men need to pray for fair weather.' In the same warning spirit, in which the English philosopher uttered this sentiment, we may say, that if the individuals now at the head of the government have strength to maintain themselves in the administration of affairs, the policy of conciliation and compromise in regard to political opponents, of vigorous retrenchment of the national expenditure, and of economical disbursement of the finances, is the only course they can pursue with safety. If, on the contrary, they fall into the error of their predecessors, and adopt a vindictive and proscriptive system, their early downfall, and a revival of civil war in its most hideous form, may be expected. Should such be the result, so great will be the exasperation on all sides, that it is impossible to realise the horrors which will ensue. Revenge on one side, and despair on the other, will induce the most fearful sacrifices. Rumors of the immediate approach of such confusion have already reached this country, and unhappily there is little reason to withhold credit from them. We regard the situation of Mexico with deep solicitude, and shall hail with sincere delight the hour when, emerging from the gloomy cloud, in which she now is, and has long been enveloped, she can assume that station in the family of nations, to which her real importance entitles her. Prejudice and error will, we trust, in time be dissipated. The steady light of refined intelligence will be shed over this portion of mankind, and the free institutions of our neighbor, like the bright summits of her own snowy mountains shining through a pure atmosphere, must be objects of genuine interest and admiration. When that day arrives, we may repose some confidence in republican sympathies.

ART. VII.—*Report of the Committee of the House of Representatives of the United States on Post-Offices and Post-Roads, to whom were referred the Memorials for and against prohibiting the Transportation of the Mails and the Distribution of Letters on Sunday.*

Counter Report of the Minority of the same Committee.

The laws of the United States which regulate the operations of the Post-Office Department, although they contain no specific